54 is a slot machine having a plurality of mechanical reels or representations of reels displayed on an electrical display unit **274**. Referring to **FIG. 2A**, if the display unit **274** is provided in the form of a video display unit, the control panel **276** may include a "See Pays" button **280** that, when activated, causes the display unit **274** to generate one or more display screens showing the odds or payout information for the game or games provided by the gaming unit **54**. As used herein, the term "button" is intended to encompass any device that allows a player to make an input, such as an input device that must be depressed to make an input selection or a display area that a player may simply touch. The control panel **276** may include a "Cash Out" button **282** that may be activated when a player decides to terminate play on the gaming unit **54**, in which case the gaming unit **54** may return value to the player, such as by returning a number of coins to the player via the payout tray **272**.

[**0054**] If the gaming unit **54** provides a slots game having a plurality of reels and a plurality of paylines which define winning combinations of reel symbols, the control panel **276** may be provided with a plurality of selection buttons **284**, each of which allows the player to select a different number of paylines prior to spinning the reels. For example, five buttons **284** may be provided, each of which may allow a player to select one, three, five, seven or nine paylines.

[**0055**] If the gaming unit **54** provides a slots game having a plurality of reels, the control panel **276** may be provided with a plurality of selection buttons **286** each of which allows a player to specify a wager amount for each payline selected. For example, if the smallest wager accepted by the gaming unit **54** is a quarter ($0.25), the gaming unit **54** may be provided with five selection buttons **286**, each of which may allow a player to select one, two, three, four or five quarters to wager for each payline selected. In that case, if a player were to activate the "5" button **284** (meaning that five paylines were to be played on the next spin of the reels) and then activate the "3" button **286** (meaning that three coins per payline were to be wagered), the total wager would be $3.75 (assuming the minimum bet was $0.25).

[**0056**] The control panel **276** may include a "Max Bet" button **288** to allow a player to make the maximum wager allowable for a game. In the above example, where up to nine paylines were provided and up to five quarters could be wagered for each payline selected, the maximum wager would be 45 quarters, or $11.25. The control panel **276** may include a spin button **290** to allow the player to initiate spinning of the reels of a slots game after a wager has been made.

[**0057**] In **FIG. 2A**, a rectangle is shown around the buttons **280**, **282**, **284**, **286**, **288**, **290**. It should be understood that that rectangle simply designates, for ease of reference, an area in which the buttons **280**, **282**, **284**, **286**, **288**, **290** may be located. Consequently, the term "control panel" should not be construed to imply that a panel or plate separate from the housing **250** of the gaming unit **54** is required, and the term "control panel" may encompass a plurality or grouping of player activatable buttons.

[**0058**] Although one possible control panel **276** is described above, it should be understood that different buttons could be utilized in the control panel **276**, and that the particular buttons used may depend on the game or games that could be played on the gaming unit **54**. If the display unit **274** is provided as a video display unit, the control panel **276** could be generated by the display unit **274**. In that case, each of the buttons of the control panel **276** could be a colored area generated by the display unit **274**, and some type of mechanism may be associated with the display unit **274** to detect when each of the buttons was touched, such as a touch-sensitive screen.

[**0059**] The gaming unit **54** may also include a mechanism **294** by which the gaming unit **54** may determine the identity of the player. This mechanism may be separate from the other elements of the gaming unit **54**, may be incorporated into one of the other elements of the gaming unit **54**, or its function may be provided by one of the other elements of the gaming unit **54**. As an example of the latter category, the card reader **262** may be used to read a card that carries an identification code that may be uniquely associated with the player so that the gaming unit **54** can differentiate that player from all other players, or so that the gaming unit **54** can differentiate that player as a member of a group of players from all players not a member of the group of players. In **FIG. 2**, a separate identification device **294** is illustrated.

[**0060**] The identification device **294** may include equipment, such as a keypad, an input pad (with optional stylus), a port (or antenna) adapted to communicate via a wired or wireless link (infrared or radio frequency link, for example) to a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA), a camera, a scanner, a retinal (or iris) scanner, fingerprint scanner, and/or a microphone. The identification device **294** may include any one of these devices, or the identification device **294** may include a combination of some or all of these devices. Thus, utilizing the identification device **294**, a player may identify him or herself by entering a unique numeric or alpha-numeric code using the key pad, for example. Alternatively, the player may use his or her finger or the stylus to sign his or her signature on the input pad. The pad and/or stylus may include instrumentation to record such characteristics as position, form, speed, and/or pressure as the player signs his or her signature. As a further alternative, the player may sign his or her signature on the Personal Digital Assistant, which signature is then converted to electronic data, and the data is then transferred via the port/antenna to the identification device **294**. As yet another alternative, the player may sign his or her signature on a piece of paper that is then photographed using the camera or scanned using the scanner (or the bill acceptor **254**) to convert the signature into electronic data. As an additional alternative, the player may place one of his or her fingers or his or her hand on the scanner, and the scanner may generate an electronic data representation of the fingerprint on one or more of the player's fingers or an electronic data representation of the pattern of the entire hand. Alternatively, the camera may be used to take a picture (live or still) of the player, the picture then being converted into electronic data. As a still further alternative, the player may place his or her eye up to the retinal (or iris) scanner, and the retinal (or iris) scanner may generate an electronic data representation corresponding to the pattern of the retina (or iris) of the player. As yet another alternative, the player may speak into the microphone, and characteristics of the spoken words (or voiceprint) may be converted into an electronic data representation.

[**0061**] Other equipment may also be used in conjunction with the identification device **294**. For example, rather than using a stylus, a mouse or glove may be used. Additionally,